United Nations A/70/116

General Assembly

Distr.: General
29 June 2015

Original: English

Seventieth session
Item 99 (b) of the preliminary list*
Review and implementation of the Concluding Document of the Twelfth Special Session of the General Assembly

United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report contains an account of the activities undertaken by the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa from July 2014 to June 2015.

During the reporting period, the Centre continued to assist, upon request, Member States and intergovernmental and civil society organizations in Africa to promote peace, security and disarmament.

In response to the continued challenge to peace, security and stability posed by the proliferation of illicit small arms and light weapons in Africa, in particular in Central Africa, the Horn of Africa and the Sahel, the Centre focused its work on providing, upon request, assistance to States to combat the illicit trafficking in such weapons and to reform their security sectors. The Centre assisted Member States in their implementation of subregional instruments to control small arms and light weapons and provided training to civilian authorities, including national commissions on small arms and light weapons, defence and security forces and United Nations peacekeeping mission personnel in the area of combating illicit small arms and light weapons. The Centre also partnered with national and international non-governmental organizations and civil society organizations to promote the Arms Trade Treaty.

* A/70/50.

15-10442 (E) 130715

Please recycle

The Centre provided technical assistance to Member States in their implementation of instruments relating to weapons of mass destruction, especially the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction, and of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004). The Centre facilitated the provision of assistance to several African States in preparing their first national reports on the implementation of the resolution and on the next steps to be taken by those States under the resolution.

The Centre continued to provide substantive and technical support on disarmament issues to the States members of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa at their ministerial and governmental expert meetings.

The Centre strengthened its own capacity to respond to requests from Member States in Africa in the fields of disarmament, peace and security through enhanced project development and resource mobilization. The Secretary-General wishes to thank those Member States and other institutions that made financial and in-kind contributions to the Centre, enabling it to fulfil its mandate during the reporting period, and calls upon all Member States and other stakeholders to continue to make contributions.

I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 69/74, the General Assembly noted with appreciation the tangible achievements and impact of the assistance provided by the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa and welcomed its contribution to disarmament, peace and security on the continent.

2. The present report is submitted pursuant to the request of the General Assembly for the Secretary-General to submit a report at its seventieth session on the implementation of the resolution. It covers the activities of the Centre from July 2014 to June 2015. A financial statement on the status of the Trust Fund for the Centre is contained in the annex.

II. Functioning and mandate of the Centre

3. The Centre was established in 1986 in Lomé pursuant to General Assembly resolution 40/151 G. It functions on the basis of existing resources within the Secretariat and of voluntary contributions that Member States and other donors may offer.

4. During the reporting period, the Centre continued to implement its programme of work in the following main areas: peace and security; conventional arms, including small arms and light weapons; weapons of mass destruction; information and outreach; and cooperation and partnerships with regional and subregional organizations and other entities.

III. Objectives and activities of the Centre

5. The Centre provides assistance, upon request, to Member States, the African Union and other intergovernmental organizations in the promotion of disarmament, peace and security in Africa through capacity-building and training, technical assistance, research and information-sharing. It also works in partnership with academic and research institutions and civil society organizations in the implementation of its programmes, projects and other activities linked to disarmament, peace and security. Owing to the specific nature of security issues in Africa, the Centre continued to place emphasis on activities linked to the prevention of the illicit trafficking in and proliferation of small arms and light weapons in Africa and on security sector reform, with the goals of reducing armed conflict and armed violence and enhancing the effectiveness and accountability of security institutions.

6. The Centre assisted African Member States in the preparation of their first national reports on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) and in the development of voluntary national implementation action plans, raised awareness of weapons of mass destruction and assisted States in the region in implementing related disarmament instruments, such as the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction (Biological Weapons Convention).

A. Peace and security

7. The Centre developed several projects contributing to the implementation of the United Nations integrated strategy for the Sahel through technical assistance to improve small arms control and physical security and stockpile management. It actively participated in the inter-agency coordination and exchange of information efforts led by the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Sahel, providing expert advice to Member States, United Nations missions and other stakeholders on issues relating to disarmament, in particular weapons stockpile management, safety and security. The Centre also initiated activities to strengthen the capacity of the National Commission on Small Arms and Light Weapons of Mali, in particular in the implementation of a national action plan on small arms and the holding of training on small arms control, which was also attended by personnel from the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA).

8. The Centre initiated an assessment survey of the small arms situation in the Sahel region and neighbouring countries and began physical security and stockpile management activities to reduce the risk of illicit trade in small arms and light weapons and ammunition in the Sahel. The activities took into account the discussions at consultative meetings on the security situation in the Sahel and the Maghreb held in Paris (October 2014), Dakar (February 2015), Wilton Park, Steyning, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (February and April 2015) and Addis Ababa (May 2015).

9. As part of its contribution to implementing the United Nations integrated strategy for the Sahel, the Centre worked with the national commissions on small arms and light weapons of Burkina Faso, Mali and the Niger on aspects relating to conventional arms and ammunition management. Activities were conducted in coordination with the African Union and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), MINUSMA, the United Nations Mine Action Service, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Sahel.

10. The Centre provided substantive support to the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Question in Central Africa at its thirty-eighth, thirty-ninth and fortieth ministerial meetings, held in Malabo (July-August 2014), Bujumbura (December 2014) and Luanda (June 2015). The Centre updated the 11 States members of the Committee on disarmament developments in the subregion, on the progress towards the entry into force of the Central African Convention for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons, Their Ammunition and All Parts and Components That Can Be Used for Their Manufacture, Repair and Assembly (Kinshasa Convention) and on the cooperation between the United Nations system in Central Africa and the Committee in the context of peace and security.

11. In January 2015, Cameroon ratified the Kinshasa Convention, becoming the fifth State party. The Convention will enter into force 30 days after the date of deposit of the sixth instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession. The Secretary-General reiterates his call upon the Member States of the region to ratify the Convention.

12. At the request of the Standing Advisory Committee, the Centre undertook to examine the adverse consequences of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons for maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea and will report to the Committee thereon.

13. The Centre provided technical and substantive input to the assessment mission of the Secretary-General requested by the Security Council on the progress of Liberia in meeting the conditions set out in Council resolution 1521 (2003). In that context, the Centre provided recommendations to the Government for it to improve the physical security and management of weapons stockpiles.

14. In the lead-up to the presidential elections in Togo and as part of its programme on security sector reform, the Centre, in coordination with the United Nations country team, provided technical expertise and advice on security sector reform and small arms control to the Togolese defence and security forces. The activity was undertaken in partnership with the Independent National Electoral Commission, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the United Nations Development Programme, the International Committee of the Red Cross and the Hanns Seidel Foundation. The Centre promoted the Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials in the lead-up to and during the elections and published an updated version of its guide to maintaining law and order during electoral periods for security forces and services. The Centre also developed and piloted a training course on weapons and ammunition management during crowd control situations. The training materials drew upon elements of the International Ammunition Technical Guidelines and the International Small Arms Control Standards.

15. The guide and training materials were shared with the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa and with the participants in a high-level meeting on elections and stability in Central Africa held in Libreville in May 2015.

B. Small arms and light weapons

16. The Centre supported African Member States in implementing international and regional instruments to combat the illicit trade in and proliferation of small arms and light weapons by providing assistance in implementing regional and national action plans on small arms and in strengthening the capacity of Governments and civil society organizations in the field of small arms control.

17. As an observer member of the African Union-Regions Steering Committee on Small Arms and Light Weapons and Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration, the Centre continued to work closely with the African Union Commission and provided substantive advice to the Steering Committee on the implementation of the African Union Strategy on the Control of Illicit Proliferation, Circulation and Trafficking of Small Arms and Light Weapons and the African Union Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Capacity Programme. The Centre provided substantive expertise to the African Union in the drafting of a regional compendium and training manual on disarmament, demobilization and reintegration. It also supported the implementation of subregional instruments on efforts to combat illicit small arms and light weapons through the provision of expert and technical advice to African regional and subregional organizations.

18. The Centre continued to support the African Union and its member States, in addition to subregional organizations, in the implementation of the African Union Strategy, which is an effective framework to improve the coordination of activities aimed at combating and preventing the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects on the continent. The Centre also provided substantive support to the Steering Committee with regard to the African Union-European Union project to fight against illicit firearms in Africa in the implementation of the second phase of the project.

19. Under a United Nations-European Union joint assistance programme on small arms, the Centre provided assistance to Burkina Faso, the Niger and Sierra Leone for the implementation of the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons. Marking machines were provided and training sessions were organized on marking and record-keeping in relation to small arms and light weapons. The project was carried out in coordination with UNODC. The Centre also conducted training on the marking and registration of small arms and light weapons in Liberia in cooperation with the United Nations Mission in Liberia and the National Commission on Small Arms and Light Weapons. With a view to promoting South-South cooperation and to making use of existing capacity in the subregion, the activities were implemented with the technical support of experts from the national commissions on small arms and light weapons of Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana.

20. In its sustained effort to support the National Commission on Small Arms and Light Weapons of Mali, the Centre provided technical assistance in the implementation of the national action plan on small arms and light weapons by conducting capacity-building and training of trainers on arms control jointly for representatives of the Government and MINUSMA. The Centre piloted a course on weapons identification and tracking and conducted an inter-institutional training course on small arms and light weapons control in Africa for national authorities and United Nations peacekeepers. In addition, using its civil society training manual, the Centre conducted capacity-building activities and provided technical support to empower national civil society organizations to tackle the proliferation of arms in Mali through national awareness-raising programmes. Building on the results of previous phases of the project, the Centre began to carry out a third phase of activities focusing on the marking and registration of government-owned and civilian-held weapons and the development of standard operating procedures for the management of imported weapons.

21. The Centre provided support to the National Commission on Small Arms and Light Weapons of Togo in the marking of civilian-held weapons in accordance with the ECOWAS Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons, Their Ammunition and Other Related Materials, the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects and the International Tracing Instrument. The activity was accompanied by an awareness-raising campaign for the public and a high-level briefing for the Government. In total, 9,064 civilian-held arms were marked and registered.

22. The Centre, in cooperation with the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research and the International Small Arms Control Standards Implementation Support Unit, conducted a regional training session for officials from East African Member States and United Nations peacekeeping missions on the International

Small Arms Control Standards Assessment Tool, a digital platform allowing experts to evaluate specific needs and accord priority to assistance for small arms control programmes.

23. In cooperation with the Economic Community of Central African States, the Centre worked on a legislation harmonization guide for the Kinshasa Convention. The Centre also provided substantive support to the Governments of Mali, Nigeria and Togo in reviewing their small arms legislation. In addition, it contributed its technical expertise to the first independent expert meeting on the establishment of the ECOWAS register and database on small arms and light weapons, organized by the ECOWAS Commission in April 2015 in Abuja.

24. Those activities also led to the development and/or publication of new and updated material, including an inter-institutional training course on small arms and light weapons control in Africa, national standard operating procedures for Côte d'Ivoire on physical security and stockpile management and a training manual to raise the awareness and build the capacity of civil society organizations with regard to practical disarmament and peacebuilding in West Africa.

C. Promoting the Arms Trade Treaty

25. The Centre continued to advocate the broad participation of African Member States in the Arms Trade Treaty. Together with civil society organizations, parliamentarians and international partners, it focused on increasing understanding of the Treaty, promoting ratification and initiating implementation in the States parties. Its efforts included a workshop for African small island developing States held in Lomé in May 2015 and, in cooperation with the ECOWAS Commission, the preparation of a seminar on the synergies and complementarities between the ECOWAS Convention and the Treaty, to be held in July 2015. In cooperation with the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, the Centre began mapping bilateral and multilateral Treaty-related assistance and cooperation activities in sub-Saharan Africa. To strengthen understanding of the contribution of the Treaty to preventing and combating gender-based violence, the Centre provided technical expertise to a regional seminar on violence against women organized by the association representing the international French-speaking police community.

26. The Centre supported several activities organized by regional, subregional and non-governmental organizations and other United Nations agencies. They included a training session for parliamentarians of Burkina Faso organized by the Parliamentary Forum on Small Arms and Light Weapons, seminars organized by the Centre on Small Arms and Light Weapons in the Great Lakes Region, the Horn of Africa and Bordering States, a seminar for non-governmental organizations in the ECOWAS region organized by UNODC, expert and outreach meetings in the framework of a European Union Treaty outreach project and an African Union meeting in preparation for the first session of the Conference of States Parties to the Treaty, in addition to several training sessions and seminars organized by civil society organizations and academic institutions. The Centre continues to engage with Member States and regional and subregional organizations on the Treaty by contributing its expertise to discussions.

D. Weapons of mass destruction

27. The Centre supported Member States in their efforts to implement Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) on the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery to non-State actors. Having received assistance from the Centre through its project entitled "Enhancing the participation of African Member States in Security Council resolution 1540 (2004): towards the tenth anniversary", three African Member States each submitted their first report on the implementation of the resolution and two submitted additional reports. Responding to assistance requests, the Centre joined the experts of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) in country visits to Malawi (May 2015), Senegal (June 2015), Togo (June 2015) and Zambia (April 2015) to provide related assistance, in particular discussing future steps to be taken by those States in the implementation of the resolution. Additional African Member States have announced their interest in inviting the Committee and its experts and the Centre to conduct similar country visits.

23. The Centre also supported the African Union Commission in the organization of a training workshop for African national points of contact and a consultation with African subregional organizations on capacity-building for their member States in the areas of chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear safety and security, held in Addis Ababa in November 2014.

29. In support of the Biological Weapons Convention, the Centre supported the Governments of Benin, Burkina Faso and Uganda in strengthening national capacity to implement their obligations under the Convention, notably regarding confidence-building measures, legislative and administrative measures, awareness-raising and the creation of a code of conduct on biosafety and biosecurity standards.

E. Information and outreach

30. As part of its efforts to make disarmament materials available to an increasing number of States in the region, the Centre translated into French the documents of the Office for Disarmament Affairs entitled "Guidelines — How to establish and maintain gun-free zones" and *Action for Disarmament: 10 Things You Can Do!* with the support of the United Nations Volunteers online service. In cooperation with the International Organization of la Francophonie, the Centre is working on a practitioner's handbook on disarmament in Africa.

31. The Centre continued to implement its communications strategy with the objective of improving outreach and interaction with Member States, regional and subregional organizations, civil society organizations and the public at large regarding its work and priorities. Briefings for the diplomatic corps were organized in Lomé (January 2015), Bamako (February 2015) and Accra (March 2015) to inform diplomats about the work of the Centre and raise their awareness of current disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation challenges in Africa.

32. The Centre's electronic newsletter, "UNREC Focus", is distributed to more than 5,500 global subscribers, providing information about regional disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation issues and the activities and achievements of the Centre. Furthermore, new interactive features, including a document database, and

links to its social media presence were added to the Centre's website. From July 2014 to June 2015, the website recorded 67,168 visitors.

33. As part of its outreach activities during the implementation of its small arms marking projects in Mali and Togo, the Centre conducted an awareness-raising campaign involving local singers and storytellers and the distribution of traditional West African *pagnes* bearing messages on the dangers posed by the destabilizing circulation of illicit small arms and light weapons.

34. In commemoration of the centenary of the First World War, the Centre, in collaboration with the University of Lomé and the French Institute in Lomé, organized a panel discussion on the use of chemical weapons during the War following the screening of two documentary films, one entitled *Ich liebe Dich* and one on the history of the use of chemical weapons and the creation of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons. To mark the first International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, the Centre, in collaboration with the Goethe Institute in Lomé and two non-governmental organizations, Association les messagers de la jarre de paix and Visions solidaires, screened a film entitled *Nuclear Holocaust*, which was followed by a public debate.

35. The six international and national United Nations Volunteers working at the Centre contributed to the promotion of volunteerism in peace and security by participating in activities for International Volunteer Day for Economic and Social Development and sharing their disarmament experiences in national and international paper and electronic publications. The Centre and the United Nations Volunteers programme cooperated in highlighting peace, security and disarmament issues at the United Nations Volunteers Partnerships Forum 2014 (September-October 2014).

IV. Operational situation of the Centre

A. Financial situation

36. The Centre was established pursuant to General Assembly resolution 40/151 G on the basis of existing resources and voluntary contributions. In 2014, voluntary contributions to the Trust Fund for the Centre were received in the amount of $575,701. Information on the status of the Trust Fund in 2014 is contained in the annex. Additional contributions were also received during the first half of 2015.

37. The Secretary-General wishes to express his gratitude to the Governments of France, Germany, Japan, Norway, Togo, the United Kingdom and the United States of America, in addition to the Economic Community of Central African States, the European Union, the donor States to the United Nations Trust Facility Supporting Cooperation on Arms Regulation, the United Nations Development Programme, the International Organization of la Francophonie and the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, for their financial contributions. He also wishes to express his appreciation to the Governments of Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana and Mali for their in-kind contributions.

B. Staffing

38. The regular budget of the United Nations currently funds the posts of the Director, a Political Affairs Officer and two national support staff. Project staff continue to be funded through voluntary contributions. During the reporting period, the Centre enhanced its cooperation with the United Nations Volunteers programme. The Secretary-General wishes to thank the Government of Finland for supporting the cost of an international United Nations Volunteer, the Government of Germany for the funding of an Associate Expert in legal affairs and the Government of the United States for supporting the cost of a national United Nations Volunteer through the Trust Fund for Global and Regional Disarmament Activities in support of the implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004).

C. Capacity-building for United Nations staff members

39. The Centre took the opportunity of visits by international experts to train its staff in Lomé and interested staff from United Nations departments, offices and agencies from the region. Staff participated in training on the International Small Arms Control Standards Assessment Tool, organized in-house, on the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction, organized by the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, and on supervisory skills, organized by the World Food Programme, in addition to online training provided by the Office of Human Resources Management and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research. The Centre offered training on small arms and light weapons security and management to civilian and uniformed personnel of MINUSMA and, in cooperation with the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, conducted pilot training on the International Small Arms Control Standards Assessment Tool with staff from United Nations field presences in Africa.

V. Conclusion

40. During the reporting period, the Centre increased its activities, with the support of donors, to provide assistance to African Member States in relation to peace, security and disarmament initiatives and enhanced its collaboration with partners with a view to achieving synergies in promoting disarmament and non-proliferation objectives in Africa.

41. The Centre provided assistance to Member States, upon request, in combating the illicit trade in and proliferation of small arms and light weapons and in implementing various instruments relating to weapons of mass destruction, including Security Council resolution 1540 (2004). Furthermore, the Centre engaged in activities to promote the Arms Trade Treaty and conducted outreach initiatives to raise awareness of disarmament and non-proliferation issues.

42. The considerable increase in requests for assistance from Member States and intergovernmental organizations illustrates the relevance of the Centre's work in the field of arms regulation, disarmament, non-proliferation and security in the region. Building on its expertise in the respective areas and lessons learned, the Centre

continues to develop and implement new projects and activities that meet the priority needs of Member States on issues within the Centre's mandate.

43. In carrying out its programme and activities, the Centre worked with a wide range of actors and strengthened its continental role by creating networks and partnerships at the pan-African and African subregional levels. The Centre also benefited from the effective partnerships that it has established and maintains with United Nations agencies and international, regional and subregional organizations, in addition to non-governmental organizations, academic institutions and civil society organizations. The ability of the Centre to coordinate with a wide range of actors and to draw on lessons learned has proved beneficial to its institutional growth. Those trends will continue as part of the Centre's efforts to maximize the utilization of resources and expertise through cooperation and sharing of experiences.

44. The Centre stands ready to continue to support Member States in tackling disarmament and non-proliferation challenges in Africa. To enable the Centre to continue its operation and fulfil its mandate effectively and comprehensively, the Secretary-General encourages all Member States and other donors to provide the Centre with the necessary financial and in-kind support.

Annex

Status of the Trust Fund for the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa for 2014*

(United States dollars)

Reserves and balance, as at 1 January 2014	**881 989**
Income	
Voluntary contributions	575 701[a]
Funds received under inter-organization arrangements	–
Interest income	3 416
Other/miscellaneous income	10 230[b]
Prior-year adjustment	(191)
Total income and prior-year adjustment	**589 155**
Expenditure	732 587
Programme support costs	95 246
Refunds to donors	444 097
Total expenditure	**1 271 930**
Reserves and balance, as at 31 December 2014	**199 214**[c]

* The status is provided provisionally pending the release of the final financial statements. The figures provided herein are therefore subject to change.

[a] During the reporting period, contributions were received from Germany ($545,654), France ($12,503) and Togo ($17,543).

[b] Represents refund of expenditure from the prior period.

[c] Consists of reserves and balance as at 1 January 2014, plus income received in 2014, less expenditure incurred during the year, plus adjustment for the reduction of 2014 expenditure.